

# Threatened and Endangered Species in Forests of Wisconsin

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# WORM-EATING WARBLER

(*Helmitheros vermivorus*)

**Federal Status:** Not Listed

**State Status:** Endangered



**Description:** The worm-eating warbler is a small (5 to 5 1/2 inches long) olive-green bird with two bold black stripes on the side of its buffy-orange head. Its back and wings are an olive-brown; the breast is a rich buff.

**Habitat:** This migratory bird inhabits the upper slopes of stream gorges, often on south-facing slopes, in dry oak and oak/pine woods in semi-open sites. It may also be found near clearings within a large (>200 acre) tract of forest.

However, when these clearings become too large, or the forest is fragmented and broken into small blocks, the worm-eating warbler no longer finds the habitat suitable.



**Forestry Considerations:** Where worm-eating warblers are found, favor single-tree selection and group-selection silviculture to mimic natural tree fall dynamics. Single-tree selection is preferred within 300 feet of perennial streams. Group-selection cuts should be less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre in size to help minimize parasitism by cowbirds and predation by other animals. When this prescription is not possible, a uniform plan of rotation cutting is desirable, so that the older sections are adjacent to each other and the younger sections are also together. Employ *Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality* and provide buffers along stream corridors. Retain patches of low shrub cover during tree harvesting or timber stand improvement. Maintain a well-developed woody and herbaceous understory to provide food, nesting sites and cover.

